

Message

From: Pualani, Barbara [Pualani.Barbara@epa.gov]
Sent: 11/12/2020 9:11:40 PM
To: R8 SLT [R8_SLT@epa.gov]
CC: R8 All PAB [R8_All_PAB@epa.gov]; Henderson, Dedre [Henderson.Dedre@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: R8 HQ News Clips - Week of November 8, 2020.docx
Attachments: R8 HQ News Clips - Week of November 8, 2020.docx

Attached here, and embedded below, are the Region 8 news clips for the week of November 8, 2020.

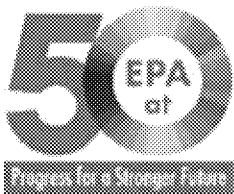
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From: Pualani, Barbara
Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2020 2:09 PM
To: WeeklyNewsclips <WeeklyNewsclips@epa.gov>; Grantham, Nancy <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov>; Johnson, Taylor <Johnson.Taylor.C@epa.gov>; Woods, Andrea <Woods.Andrea@epa.gov>
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Region 8:

Daily Inter Lake: EPA closes Libby field office after 20 years

After overseeing more than 20 years of asbestos cleanup in Lincoln County, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officials are closing their Libby field office. Beth Archer, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, said the agency shuttered its Ninth Street information center on Oct. 23. All told, EPA officials oversaw more than \$500 million spent and over one million cubic yards of contaminated soil removed as part of cleanup operations. Excluding the former W.R. Grace vermiculite mine site, all operable units within the superfund site have undergone cleanup. EPA officials are still studying the mine site to determine the risk posed by the

remaining asbestos. The agency expects to select a remedial plan for the area within the next few years. Every five years, EPA officials will also reevaluate each operable unit within the superfund site.

Missoula Current: Mining industry, Montana GOP oppose selenium limit for Kootenai River, Lake Koocanusa

The state of Montana is proposing water quality limits to protect Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River from selenium coming down from Canada's coalmines, but the mining industry and Republican legislators are trying to block the effort. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality last week hosted an online public hearing as part of the comment period on proposed selenium standards in Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River below the Libby Dam. On Sept. 24, DEQ proposed a limit of 8.5 milligrams per kilogram of selenium in dried whole fish tissue to protect fish and aquatic species from damage to their reproductive systems. The agency is also proposing a selenium concentration limit of 0.8 micrograms per liter in lake water and 3.1 micrograms per liter in the river. The difference is because moving water poses less of a pollution problem than standing water.

Deseret News: No, Utah's air pollution problem has not been solved

Overshadowed by recent election drama are Utah problems that preceded the election and will continue long afterwards. For years, air quality has been at or near the top of concerns for Utah voters, and with good reason. Everyone knows the Wasatch Front is capable of air pollution buildup that can rival the worst in the country. For many years, we have been in "nonattainment" status for Environmental Protection Agency's 24-hour PM 2.5 standard, which reflects our acute spikes during winter inversions. The EPA is proposing to reclassify Salt Lake City and Provo as attainment for the 24-hour standard. To the extent that our winter inversions have become less intense is obviously to everyone's benefit. But there is much more to our pollution story.

Bozeman Daily Chronicle: Bozeman city commissioners push Idaho Pole urban renewal area forward

Bozeman city commissioners have cautiously pushed forward a proposal to increase public investment in an area of northeast Bozeman around a former Superfund site. The commissioners voted 4-1 this week to provisionally approve a plan to create the Pole Yard urban renewal district — which would encompass more than 270 acres including the former Idaho Pole Co. property that was partially removed from the EPA's Superfund list earlier this year. The pole yard were placed on the Superfund list in 1986 after it was discovered the wood-treating operation contaminated soil and groundwater.

Colorado Public Radio/KRCC: Slag Pile Cleanup At Colorado Smelter Superfund Site In Pueblo May Be Delayed

The Environmental Protection Agency may not have funding next year for a portion of the cleanup at the Colorado Smelter Superfund site in south Pueblo. This project targets toxic lead and arsenic left behind when the former smelter closed more than a century ago. The EPA poured additional funds into the \$75 million project, fast-tracking soil cleanups at residential properties in the area. Contaminated soil has already been removed from more than 500 yards and replaced with clean landscape material. This work is slated to continue as planned. But the smelter's massive slag pile still needs to be dealt with. Based on federal budgeting projections for 2021, area residents like Velma Campbell are worried that funds will disappear next year for cleaning up the slag pile left behind by the long-gone smelter.

Deseret News: EPA announces 'significant' milestone in Utah's battle over air quality

Residents in large portions of the Wasatch Front can now breathe easier, a bit anyhow, with the news that these areas are set to be in compliance with federal standards for levels of PM2.5, or fine-particulate pollution. Greg Sopkin, the administrator over the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 8, which includes Utah, announced Tuesday the Provo and Salt Lake areas are being classified as in attainment after more than a decade of not meeting the standards. The proposal to reclassify was published in the Federal Register and is out for comment through Dec. 7. The Provo area includes Utah County, while the Salt Lake City area ropes in portions of Weber, Davis, Box Elder and Tooele counties. "It is a great day for air quality along the Wasatch Front," Sopkin said, noting that in 2009 — when these areas first were classified as nonattainment — the measurement

for fine-particulate pollution in Salt Lake City was 48 micrograms per cubic meter, well above the federal threshold of 35.

The Salt Lake Tribune: EPA: Wasatch Front air now in compliance with pollution standards

Years of investments in emission reductions and cleaner fuels have improved Utah's air quality to a point that federal authorities Tuesday declared the Wasatch Front's air quality "in attainment" for particulate matter, the gritty pollution that often fills the valleys during wintertime inversions. While state officials crowed about Utah's progress, clean air advocates say the Salt Lake Valley's airshed still has an unacceptable pollution load, with more industrial emission sources and population growth on the way. After concluding Wasatch Front air quality now meets standards for fine particulate, or PM2.5, and coarse particulate, or PM10, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to lift its oversight of Utah's efforts to reduce this type of air pollution. "That bureaucratic change is likely to hamper, or even reverse efforts and public policies needed to further reduce our air pollution," said Jonny Vasic, executive director of Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment. "The EPA should look at the larger picture. The Wasatch Front needs a greater commitment to air quality improvement, not less." But Utah regulators say they have no intentions of putting the brakes on clean-air efforts, they are just shifting gears. At a Capitol ceremony Tuesday, officials emphasized successes Utah has seen cleaning up the air in its urban areas. Even as the economy boomed and population climbed, overall emissions have declined, according to Utah Gov. Gary Herbert.

ABC4 News: EPA proposes changes to Utah's air quality status, doctors warn we're not there yet

The EPA announced a proposal to change the air quality status of Wasatch Front areas (Salt Lake and Provo) to say that the areas comply with EPA standards for the first time since 2009. The measure looks specifically at PM 2.5 pollution in the air. A local Doctor's group says air quality is not good enough yet.

KSL: EPA: Wasatch Front Winter Air 'Cleanest In A Decade'

The Environmental Protection Agency said the Wasatch Front is seeing the cleanest winter air in more than a decade. The state invested millions of dollars in taxpayer money to address pollution, and now it appears to be paying off. The ongoing pollution problem in Utah has been a concern for father Hunter Edin. "I am going to be raising my kids here. How much exposure do I want them to have?" Edin said. He was elated to hear the EPA declare Tuesday that the Wasatch front has come within federal pollution levels for the first time since 2009.

Fox 13: After ten-year effort, Utah meets EPA's clean air standards

The Environmental Protection Agency says the Wasatch Front has met attainment standards for air quality. It's taken ten years to get to this point, but thanks to regulations and help from Utahns, the state can now say it meets standards. "It's a good day, it's a strong day," said Thom Carter, Executive Director of the Utah Clean Air Partnership (UCAIR). "It's an exciting day for the people of Utah." Carter says the state has worked to achieve the federal air quality standards, which for so long had been harmful to residents, especially those living in populated valleys. "Air quality is first a geography problem, then it's a weather problem, then it's an emissions problem," Carter said. "So we're kind of behind the eight ball." Carter says state and local groups worked overtime to put regulations in place to meet the standards.

KUTV: Feds say Utah turned a corner on air quality, but is it sustainable?

The Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday announced it is preparing to re-classify the Wasatch Front as a region that is "attaining federal standards" for particulate matter. The move, if approved after a public comment period, would take Utah off a bad list. Particulate matter — measured in a few different sizes — is primarily associated with winter pollution. Ozone is primarily a summertime pollution. The region hit the mark for particulate matter three years in a row, from 2017 to 2019. Bryce Bird, who leads the state's Division of Air Quality, said Utah has reduced its emissions while increasing its population. He said local studies have shown marked improvements in asthma-related hospitalizations and heart attacks. "Whenever you improve air quality, it does really improve people's health," he said.

KUER: AM News Brief: Romney Wants Aid For Families, Cities Reach EPA Standards & Biden And Fossil Fuels

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Tuesday that Logan, Salt Lake City and Provo have met air quality standards for fine particulate pollutants. Scott Baird, with Utah's Department of Environmental Quality, called this a significant achievement but said the state can't stop here. "There's a lot of work ahead of us, but we take confidence in the fact that we know what we have done is working and that will motivate us to move forward," he said. Baird said now the goal is to reduce emissions across the state by an additional 25% in the next six years. The EPA also recognized Salt Lake and Utah Counties and Ogden for meeting the goal for larger, coarse pollutants.